

Unwrapping the Gifts

Different Gifts, One Body

In this series, which coincides with Pentecost, we look at what the Bible says about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and how they should be used in church.

Welcome

What is your greatest talent? And how do you use it?

Worship

Sing: Holy Spirit, you are welcome here: [Holy Spirit You are Welcome Here \[Lyric Video\] - Kim Walker-Smith - YouTube](#)

It's easy to be self-effacing and downplay the gifts you have. Or to be arrogant and forget the giver of gifts.

Spend some time thanking God for your gifts

Word

In his letters, Paul provides teaching to early church congregations about the gifts of the Holy Spirit – what they are for, and why they are given.

Read Romans 12v1-2

1. Why does Paul use the phrase “living sacrifices” to describe the lives of the believers? And why does he use the word “bodies”?
2. What does it mean to be “no longer conformed to the pattern of this world”?

Read Romans 12v3-8

3. Why is Paul’s advice to the Romans in v3 important for any church?
4. Note *“in accordance with the measure of faith God has given to you”* (v3) and *“according to the grace given to us”* (v6). Why is this important for understanding the spiritual gifts God gives?
5. Here (v4-5) and in 1 Cor 12, Paul likens the church to a human body. Why is this a good analogy?
6. In what ways are the gifts described in v6-8 used in the local church today?

Witness

Reflect on these gifts, and think about how they are used by people for God’s mission:

- 1) in St Mary’s Church,
- 2) at the Branch, and
- 3) among our mission partners in different parts of the world (e.g. Open Doors, Great Lakes Outreach (GLO)).

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For the common good.

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Welcome

Describe a gift that you have received but that has been enjoyed not just by you, but by your whole family.

Worship

We sing: Yet not I but through Christ in me: [Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me - CityAlight | LYRIC VIDEO - YouTube](#)

Take time to praise God for sending the Holy Spirit, and to thank God for:

- a) Church and our fellowship with each other.
- b) Other people's gifts.

Word

1 Corinthians 12v4-7

Read 1 Corinthians 12v4-7

- 1. Why is it important that, although there are many gifts, there is one Spirit and one Lord? (v4-6)
- 2. The gifts of the Spirit are given "for the common good." (v7). What do we mean by "the common good"? What does Paul mean by "the common good" here?

- 3. How does the analogy of the church as a body help us to think about the common good? Skim through 1 Corinthians 12v12-26 to help with the answer.
- 4. Why is Paul stressing that the gifts of the Spirit should be used for "the common good" here?

1 Corinthians 12v8-11

Ask one person to read 1 Corinthians 12v8-11 and another to read Romans 12v4-8.

Both are lists of spiritual gifts – but compare the two passages:

- 5. How are the two lists differ?
(hint: think about the type of gifts listed and the context in which they are listed)
- 6. Why do the two lists differ?
- 7. How can we encourage people in our church to use their gifts well?

Witness

Think about the ways in which:

- a) we can support one another as individual Christians with our gifts.
- b) we can support fellow Christians in other churches, in organisations that resource our churches and our mission partners?

Pray for the people and situations we have mentioned.

Unwrapping the Gifts.

Tongues and prophecy: keeping order in public worship

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Welcome

After inviting the Holy Spirit to lead the discussion and bring understanding, chat around the following question: “What’s one thing that has helped you grow in your faith recently?”

Worship

Sing: Build My Life by Pat Barrett
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZW4_8_zCBE)

Word

Recap: Paul’s addressing the misuse and misunderstanding of **spiritual gifts** in the Corinthian church. Chapter 13 emphasized **love** as the highest virtue. Chapter 14 focuses on **how spiritual gifts should build up the church.**

Read 1 Corinthians 14:1–19 aloud (focus on tongues & prophecy)

Verses 1–5: Prophecy Over Tongues

- Why do you think Paul says to “pursue love” before anything else?
- What is the difference between speaking in tongues and prophesying?
- Why does Paul emphasize edifying the church?

Verses 6–12: Clear Communication

- What stands out to you about Paul’s illustrations with musical instruments and languages? How do these images help us understand the importance of clarity in worship?

Verses 13–19: Spirit and Mind in Worship

- What does it mean to pray or sing with both spirit and mind?
- How do you personally balance emotion and understanding in your worship?

Read 1 Corinthians 14:20–33 (focus on purpose and order)

Verses 20–25: Impact on Outsiders

- Why does Paul say prophecy is more beneficial for unbelievers?
- Can you remember a church service that was confusing or inspiring for a newcomer? *n.b: Highlight that our worship gatherings should be both meaningful for believers and accessible to those who are seeking.*

Verses 26–33: Orderly Worship

- What guidelines does Paul give for contributing during worship?
- How can our churches today reflect the principle that “God is not a God of confusion but of peace”?

Witness

Take time to talk among yourselves about gifts and which gifts you might ‘eagerly desire’ so that you might ‘follow the way of love’ and build-up the church.

Pray into those desires for one another.

Give time to listen to God and invite him to speak to you and to offer you words or insights with which you might be able to build one another up.

Perhaps write down one way group members can personally contribute to building up others in the body this week.